

Rother Association of Local Councils (RALC)
Minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2022 at 2:30 pm
(Virtual Meeting held on Zoom)

Present:

David Young (Chairman), Keith Robertson (Catsfield), David Penfold (Pett), Gillian Branford, Ros Day (Crowhurst), Dale Wheeler (Battle), Michael Edwards, Peter Lamont, Jonathan Vine-Hall (Sedlescombe), Amy Head (Peasmarsh), Jenner Sands (Icklesham), Karen Ripley (Salehurst), Malcolm Johnston (Rother District Council), Sue Prochak (Rother District Council), Martin Griffiths, Graham Furness.

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Pauline Glew (Sedlescombe), Tracy Dixon (Brede), Isla Dacey (Highways), Trevor Leggo (ESALC), Paulette Barton (Etchingham), Dianne Mower (Brightling).

3. Accuracy of Minutes of the meeting held

The agenda states 6 July 2022 when it should have said 6 April 2022.

4. Matters arising from previous meeting

None.

5. ESCC/ County Matters

Parishes are receiving support from the police regarding speeding but it is not treated as high priority. Parishes should continue to gather and produce more data. RALC will approach Safer Sussex to attend RALC meetings.

6. Rother Matters

RALC members received Sue Prochak's report.

David Young and Keith Robertson met with Sue Prochak, Malcolm Johnston and Lorna Ford to discuss concerns around the risks and finances of the community project. There are issues surrounding risk management of the redevelopment of Bexhill town centre and the Town Hall.

Malcolm Johnston confirmed Rother are looking at the current economic situation and will review a number of projects. Rother are actively looking at affordability with the risks of borrowing and rises in interest rates. The Town Hall is subject to final affordability checks.

7. Resilience

David Young: Through the Sussex Resilience Forum organisations have come together to prepare for cases of emergency. There is a 26-page document which can be downloaded online which provides for what the risks are, what we need to do and how to handle emergencies.

There is also a Community Awareness Plan which is an Excel spreadsheet which asks questions that you need to write down including telephone numbers, what the emergency is and how you would handle the emergency. It is a Government UK initiative.

Links to both documents can be provided through RALC.

The biggest thing is water supply when it gets cut off. We need to have a local point where water is delivered and that is what Southern Water is doing. They are apparently writing to each Parish Council asking for the best place to deliver water to.

Sue Prochak: There is a template for parishes and it would be so good if all the parishes completed it. Lorna Foord (Deputy Chief Executive at Rother District Council) deals with emergency planning at Rother.

Karen Ripley: The template is through a project manager suggested by ESALC who can help and provide a template. It is a paying service.

8. Trevor Leggo – ESALC

Trevor sent his apologies prior to the meeting.

9. Traffic Management

Keith Robertson: We do have support from the police with regards to community Speed Watch. Project Edward starts on 17 October 2022. In Catsfield there is a police officer coming to assist. Community Support Officers will come out to parishes if you ask them and have a Speed Watch team. Community Support Officers have now been allocated to different groups of villages.

Q: Karen Ripley: What is Project Edward?

Keith Robertson: Every year, maybe twice a year, the nation comes together and tries to reduce speeding by having a greater presence. It flows through police activity but also Speed Watch takes part and tries to get as many teams out as possible. Catsfield have asked police and they have said they will come out and support.

Jonathan Vine-Hall: Bob Kenwood, a police volunteer, has come out to each of the three groups I work with to help them and brings along his radar which reaches a lot further than the ones that most of us have which is really helpful. He is very supportive.

10. RALC Subscriptions

Keith Robertson: RALC have been preparing accounts in order to see what the financial position is. We have been running at a deficit for a couple of years approximately £500 - £600 per year. We are not recovering enough money from the parishes in relation to our mapping licence. We would need to increase the fee by 18% to cover the cost. We would need to raise RALC subscriptions by 40% to allow us to break even. A few parishes do not appear to have paid their subscriptions for a couple of years.

Members at the meeting confirmed they had not received RALC's subscription invoice for 2022/2023.

Keith Robertson: We need to ask our members to agree to the increase in our fees if needed to allow us to break even. All parishes will receive a budget statement showing our income and expenditure once prepared. Our aim is to break even.

11. Dates of next meetings

The next RALC meeting will be held at Staplecross Village Hall on 11 January 2023. Details will provided in due course.